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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 TRSE-00 IO-11 ACDA-05

SAJ-01 /088 W

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R 201227Z FEB 76

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8027

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR

SUBJECT: CGT OUT TO RECRUIT MORE MEMBERS

1. SUMMARY: CGT LAUNCHED MAJOR MEMBERSHIP DRIVE TO REACH 3 MILLION MARK BY CLOSE OF 1976. THIS PROVIDES CGT WITH OPPORTUNITY PROJECT CONCERN FOR DEMOCRACY, IN LINE WITH SIMILAR EFFORT BY PCF, TO INDIRECTLY RECRUIT FOR THE PCF AND USE CURRENT LULL IN UNION ACTIVITIES FOR A CAMPAIGN WHICH IN ADDITION TO SWELLING ITS RANKS WOULD HELP KEEP THE CGT FLAG HIGH AND VISIBLE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE COURSE OF AN UNPRECEDENTED MEETING (18 FEB) OF CGT'S NATIONAL CONFEDERAL COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF SECRETARIES GENERAL OF FEDERATIONS AND DEPARTMENTAL UNIONS ENLARGED TO INCLUDE 150 SECRETARIES OF LOCAL

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UNIONS IN THE PARIS AREA THE CGT LEADERS LAUNCHED A MAJOR RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN WITH A GOAL TO REACH

3 MILLION MEMBERS BY THE END OF 1976. EQUALLY UN-
PRECEDENTED WAS THE DECISION TO OPEN THE MEETING TO
THE PRESS INCLUDING THE UK, FRG AND U.S. LABOR
COUNSELORS.

3. MEETING OPENED WITH A REPORT BY CGT'S SECGEN
GEORGES SEGUY (COPY TO EUR) WHICH WAS A REMARKABLE
PIECE OF ORATORY FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- (A) MODERATION OF LANGUAGE WHICH WENT SO FAR AS TO
REDUCE STRIKINGLY THE USE OF IDEOLOGICAL SLOGANS;
THE WORD SOCIALISM WAS MENTIONED TWICE ONLY.
- (B) A SUSTAINED EFFORT TO PROJECT A CGT CONCERN
FOR DEMOCRATIC RULE AND FOR RANK AND FILE PARTICIPA-
TION IN DECISION MAKING. SEGUY WAS IMPRESSIVELY
CONVINCING ON THIS POINT.
- (C) AN UNUSUALLY LONG LIST OF ACCURATELY DESCRIBED
FAILINGS ON THE PART OF CGT IN ITS RELATIONS WITH
THE WORKERS BOTH IN AND OUT OF THE CGT TO EXPLAIN WHY
CGT HAD NOT DONE BETTER IN THE LAST FEW YEARS. HE
ADMITTED THAT CGT NEEDED TO RECRUIT 13 PERCENT A
YEAR IN ORDER TO JUST MAINTAIN ITS PRESENT MEMBERSHIP
OF 2.4 MILLION INCLUDING 400,000 RETIRED.
- (D) A COMMITMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES
TO CARRY OUT THIS CAMPAIGN WHICH IN SUBSEQUENT
PRESS CONFERENCE HE SAID WILL INCLUDE 250,000 FFS
FROM CGT'S RESERVE FUND AND 250,000 FFS FROM
AFFILIATES.

4. EVEN MORE EXTRAORDINARY (AND UNFORTUNATELY VERY
CLEVER) WAS SEGUY'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THIS NEW
MEMBERSHIP DRIVE WILL DISPENSE WITH THE FORMALITY
OF THE "APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP" AND ALL THOSE
WHO WOULD SHOW INTEREST IN JOINING WOULD IMMEDIATELY
BE HANDED CGT CARDS AT THE USUAL BARGAIN RATE OF
3 FRANCS A CARD. IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE HE EX-
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PLAINED THAT SINCE EVERY MEMBER MUST BELONG TO A
PROFESSIONAL FEDERATION THE NEW RECRUITS WILL BE
ASSIGNED TO THEIR APPROPRIATE TRADES AT THE TIME OF
RENEWAL OF THEIR FIRST CARD, NAMELY BEGINNING OF
1977.

5. SEGUY SOUGHT TO REASSURE THE OTHER LABOR
ORGANIZATIONS BY STATING THAT THE CAMPAIGN WILL AIM
AT THE UNORGANIZED AND ESPECIALLY AT THE ESTIMATED
4 MILLION WORKERS WHO VOTE FOR THE CGT IN PLANT

ELECTIONS WITHOUT BEING MEMBERS.

6. SEGUY'S SPEECH WAS ALSO NOTABLE FOR HIS MINIMAL
REFERENCE TO THE CGT UNITY OF ACTION AGREEMENT WITH
THE CFDT AND HIS ADMISSION IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE
THAT DESPITE THIS AGREEMENT THE COMPETITION BETWEEN
THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IS FIERCE

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"BUT NORMAL."

7. THE REFERENCES TO THE COMMON PROGRAM, ALTHOUGH
NUMEROUS, WERE NOT OVERRIDING. MOST SIGNIFICANT
IN THIS CONNECTION WAS SEGUY'S DETERMINED EFFORT
TO MAKE THE POINT THAT CAPITALIST FORCES IN EUROPE

AND THE USA WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO FRUSTRATE
THE RISING FORTUNES OF THE UNITED LEFT IN FRANCE.

8. FOLLOWING SEGUY'S SPEECH FIVE DELEGATES
REPRESENTATIVE OF EACH OF THE VARIOUS GROUPS ATTEND-
ING THE MEETING SPOKE BUT WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY WAS
OF MARGINAL INTEREST. SEGUY RECOGNIZED IN HIS PRESS
CONFERENCE THAT THE DELEGATES' SPEECHES WERE OF
UNEVEN QUALITY, AN ADMISSION WHICH SUSTAINS THE VIEW
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OF MOST OBSERVERS THAT WHILE THE DELEGATES
WHO SPOKE WERE HAND-PICKED BY THE CGT THEY WERE NOT
NECESSARILY TOLD WHAT TO SAY.

9. THE LABOR COUNSELORS COMMENTED ON THE FACT
THAT THERE WAS NOTHING IN THAT MEETING WHICH WOULD
HAVE DISTINGUISHED IT FROM A SIMILAR MEETING BY
FORCE OUVRIERE FOR EXAMPLE. THE LEVEL OF ATTENTION
WAS ABOUT THE SAME. THE APPLAUSE DID NOT EXCEED
A USUAL 50-60 PERCENT OF THE DELEGATES. THE
BOURGEOIS APPEARANCE OF MOST DELEGATES EVEN THOUGH
OF OBVIOUS WORKERS' ORIGIN WAS THE SAME AS CAN BE
FOUND IN ANY OTHER TRADE UNION MEETING. THE SAME
APPLIES TO THE CGT LEADERS AT THE HEAD TABLE. THERE
WAS DISCIPLINE BUT NO REGIMENTATION. THE ONLY
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE WAS THE FACT THAT BEFORE IT
WAS ANNOUNCED THAT SEGUY'S SPEECH WAS TO BE DISTRIBU-
TED TO ALL DELEGATES PRACTICALLY ALL OF THEM WERE
SEEN TAKING NOTES. SOMETHING THAT IS RARELY SEEN
IN OTHER MEETINGS. THIS IS PROBABLY AS MUCH OF A SIGN
OF DEDICATION AND EARNESTNESS AS OF A COMPULSION TO
MAKE SURE THAT THEY GOT THE CGT LINE STRAIGHT.

10. COMMENT: THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT CGT'S
MEMBERSHIP DRIVE IS AS MUCH DICTATED BY ITS OWN
INTERESTS IN THE MATTER AS BY THE PCF INTEREST TO
SUSTAIN ITS CLAIM THAT IT IS A WORKERS PARTY. THE
IDEA OF GIVING OUT CARDS WITHOUT MEMBERSHIP APPLICAT-
IONS MAKES IT A FOREGONE CONCLUSION THAT THE 3 MILLION
MARK WILL BE ATTAINED IN A MATTER OF A FEW MONTHS.
HOWEVER, WHILE IT MAY BE EASIER TO RECRUIT NEW
MEMBERS IN THIS MANNER THE PROBLEM OF HOW TO KEEP
THEM AND HAVE THEM PAY DUES WILL BE EVEN GREATER
THAN IS USUALLY THE CASE.

11. CGT RECRUITMENT IS ALSO INDIRECT RECRUITMENT
FOR THE PCF. SEGUY ADMITTED AS MUCH WHEN HE TOLD UK
AND U.S. LABOR COUNSELORS THAT CGT MILITANTS AFTER
A WHILE DEVELOP A POLITICAL AWARENESS WHICH LEADS

THEM TO PARTY MEMBERSHIP.

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12. SEGUY'S PITCH IN LAUNCHING THE DRIVE IS IN LINE WITH THE PCF EFFORT TO REFURBISH ITS IMAGE WITH A THICK VENEER OF DEMOCRACY. CGT COULD NOT AFFORD TO LAG FAR BEHIND IN UNDERTAKING A SIMILAR EFFORT FOR ITSELF. CURIOUSLY SEGUY'S DRIVE TO GET QUANTITY AT THE PRICE OF QUALITY WILL IN TIME BECOME AN INDEPENDENT FACTOR FAVORING DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES. AS A RULE THE CHANCES OF HOLDING TOGETHER THE RANKS OF MASS FOLLOWERS ARE MUCH GREATER THROUGH DEMOCRACY THAN THROUGH IDEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINE AND AUTHORITARIAN MANAGEMENT WHICH NORMALLY ALIENATE ALL BUT THE FAITHFUL.

13. CGT'S DRIVE CAN ALSO BE INTERPRETED AS AN ADMISSION THAT THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR AGITATION AND THE RANK AND FILE KNOWS BEST AND HAS RESISTED EXHORTATIONS TO THAT EFFECT. WHY NOT THEN USE THE CURRENT LULL TO THROW THE NETS FOR MORE CATCH? IS THERE A BETTER WAY AT TIMES LIKE THESE TO KEEP THE CGT FLAG UP AND VISIBLE IN EVERY PLANT, METRO, TRAIN AND SHOP?

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